

Remarks

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner:

(1) rejected claim 1 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Frassica;

(2) rejected claim 1 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Jones et al.; and

(3) rejected claims 2, 3 and 11 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Frassica or Jones et al. in view of Kagan et al.

In response to Items 1 and 2 above, Applicant has now amended independent claim 1 so as to further distinguish the present invention from the prior art of record. Reconsideration of independent claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 1 of the present invention comprises a threaded introducer system for accessing a bodily passageway, the introducer system comprises apparatus for connecting an object received within a lumen to a tube, the apparatus comprises a rotary coupling attached to a tube such that the rotary coupling may rotate freely about the longitudinal axis of the tube while being longitudinally fixed to the tube.

Applicant believes that Frassica '537 discloses a system of rotate-to-advance medical devices configured with external screw threads and configured for advancement by rotation in mammalian genitourinary and gastrointestinal passages and organs.

Applicant further believes that Frassica '537 does not disclose apparatus for connecting an object received within a lumen to a tube, the apparatus comprising a rotary coupling attached to the object and the tube such that the object attached to the rotary coupling may rotate freely about the longitudinal axis of the tube while being fixed to the tube.

Applicant believes that Jones et al. disclose a percutaneous catheterization device having a threaded subcutaneous sleeve and a threaded external access port.

Applicant believes that Jones et al. does not disclose apparatus for connecting an object received within a lumen to a tube, the apparatus comprising a rotary coupling attached to the object and the tube such that the object attached to the rotary coupling may rotate freely about the longitudinal axis of the tube while being fixed to the tube.

Accordingly, independent claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

In response to Item 3 above, Applicant responds as follows. Frassica '537 and Jones et al. have been discussed hereinabove.

Applicant believes that Kagan et al. disclose an endoscope for direct visualization of the spine, the endoscope consisting of a fiberoptic bundle disposed within a catheter. Applicant further believes that Kagan et al. does not disclose a rotatable coupling adapted to attached a gastrointestinal endoscope to an instrument body such that the gastrointestinal endoscope may rotate freely about the longitudinal axis of the instrument body while being longitudinally fixed to the instrument body.

Claim 2, which depends directly from independent claim 1, is believed to be in condition for allowance as neither Frassica '537, Jones et al., nor Kagan et al. teach apparatus for connecting an object received within a lumen to a tube, the apparatus comprising a rotary coupling attached to the object and the tube such that the object attached to the rotary coupling may rotate freely about the longitudinal axis of the

tube while being fixed to the tube. Accordingly, allowance of claim 2 is respectfully requested.

Applicant has now amended independent claim 3 so as to further distinguish the present invention as claimed from the prior art of record. Reconsideration of independent claim 3 is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 3 of the present invention comprises a visualization system for traversing a bodily passageway, the system comprises visualization apparatus received in the lumen for visualizing structures disposed adjacent to the distal end of the tube, a rotatable coupling attached to the visualization apparatus and the tube such that the visualization apparatus may rotate freely about the longitudinal axis of the tube while being longitudinally fixed to the tube.

Independent claim 3 is believed to be in condition for allowance as neither Frassica '537, Jones et al., nor Kagan et al. teach a rotatable coupling attached to the visualization apparatus and the tube such that the visualization apparatus may rotate freely about the longitudinal axis of the tube while being longitudinally fixed to the tube. Accordingly, allowance of independent claim 3 is respectfully requested.

Applicant has now amended independent claim 11 so as to further distinguish the present invention as claimed from the prior art of record. Reconsideration of independent claim 11 is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 11 of the present invention comprises an access device for accessing a bodily conduit, the access device comprising a rotatable coupling adapted to attach a gastrointestinal endoscope to a body such that the gastrointestinal endoscope may rotate freely about the longitudinal axis of the body while being longitudinally fixed to the body.

Independent claim 11 is believed to be in condition for allowance as neither Frassica '537, Jones et al., nor Kagan et al. teach an access device for accessing a bodily conduit, the access device comprising a rotatable coupling adapted to attach a gastrointestinal endoscope to a body such that the gastrointestinal endoscope may rotate freely about the longitudinal axis of the body while being longitudinally fixed to the body. Accordingly, allowance of independent claim 11 is respectfully requested.

In the event that any fees may be required in this matter,
please charge the same to Deposit Account No. 16-0221.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

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